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(Announcements)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

CALL FOR PROPOSALS — EACEA/10/14

Erasmus+ programme

Key action 3: Support for policy reform — Prospective initiatives

European policy experimentations in the fields of education and training and youth: transnational cooperation for the implementation of innovative policies under the leadership of high-level public authorities

(2014/C 51/08)

1. Description, objectives, and priority themes

The general objective of the call for proposals is to encourage the assessment of the systemic impact of innovative policy measures through field trials in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of education and training systems and youth policies. This call aims at involving high-level public authorities of the eligible countries in the collection and evaluation of relevant evidence to back and monitor policy reform using sound and widely recognised evaluation methods based on large-scale field trials.

The specific objectives of this call are to:

- promote transnational cooperation and mutual learning between competent authorities at the highest level in order to test and improve policy implementation systems, structures and processes, with a potentially significant impact,
- facilitate the collection and analysis of substantive evidence allowing the responsible public authorities to assess and monitor the implementation of innovative policies,
- identify key criteria and conditions for effective policy implementation and monitoring,
- facilitate transferability and scalability.

The priority themes for this call are:

- assessment of transversal skills in basic and secondary education,
- practical entrepreneurial experience at school,
- cooperation on innovative methods for fast and smooth academic recognition across borders in higher education,
- reducing the number of low-skilled adults,
- encouraging the development and internationalisation of young people's volunteering.

2. Eligible countries

Proposals from legal entities established in one of the following programme countries are eligible:

- the 28 Member States of the European Union,
- the EFTA/EEA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway ⁽¹⁾,
- EU candidate countries: Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ⁽²⁾;
- the Swiss Confederation ⁽³⁾.

3. Eligible applicants

The term 'applicants' refers to all organisations and institutions participating in a proposal regardless of their role in the project.

Applicants considered eligible to respond to this call are:

- (a) public authorities (Ministry or equivalent) responsible for education, training or youth at the highest level in the relevant national or regional context (reference to highest level considers NUTS codes 1 or 2; for countries where NUTS codes 1 or 2 are not available, please apply the highest NUTS code available ⁽⁴⁾). Public authorities at the highest level responsible for sectors other than education, training and youth (e.g. employment, finance, social affairs, health, etc.) are considered eligible as long as they demonstrate that they have a specific competence in the area in which the experimentation is to be carried out. Public authorities can delegate to be represented by other public or private organisations, as well as legally established networks or associations of public authorities, provided that the delegation is in writing and makes explicit reference to the proposal being submitted;
- (b) public or private organisations or institutions active in the fields of education, training or youth;
- (c) public or private organisations or institutions carrying out activities linked to education, training and/or youth in other socio-economic sectors (e.g. recognition centres, chambers of commerce, trade organisations, cultural organisations, evaluation entities, research entities, etc.).

4. Minimum partnership composition

The minimum partnership requirement for this call is four entities representing three eligible countries. Specifically:

- (a) at least one public authority (Ministry or equivalent) or delegated body — as described in point 3(a) — from three different eligible countries, or a legally established network/association of public authorities representing at least three different eligible countries. The network or association must have a mandate from at least three relevant public authorities — as described under point 3(a) — to operate on their behalf for the specific proposal.

Proposals must include at least one public authority as indicated under point 3(a) from a Member State.

⁽¹⁾ The participation of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway is subject to an EEA Joint Committee Decision. If, at the time of the grant award decision, the Erasmus+ Regulation has not been incorporated in the EEA Agreement, participants from these countries will not be funded and will not be taken into account with regard to the minimum size of consortia/partnerships.

⁽²⁾ The participation of Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the present call for proposals is subject to the signature of a memorandum of understanding between the Commission and the competent authorities of each of these countries respectively. If, at the time of the grant award decision, the memorandum of understanding has not been signed, participants from this country will not be funded and will not be taken into account with regard to the minimum size of consortia/partnerships.

⁽³⁾ The participation of the Swiss Confederation is subject to the conclusion of a bilateral agreement to be concluded with this country. If, at the time of the grant award decision, this bilateral agreement has not been signed, participants from the Swiss Confederation will not be funded and will not be taken into account with regard to the minimum size of consortia/partnerships.

⁽⁴⁾ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/correspondence_tables/national_structures_eu

Public authorities participating or represented in the proposal shall be responsible for strategic leadership of the project and for steering the experimentation in their own jurisdiction;

- (b) at least one public or private entity with expertise in evaluation of policy impact. Such entity shall be responsible for the methodological aspects and the evaluation protocols. The proposal can involve more than one evaluation entity, as long as the work is coordinated and consistent.

5. Coordination

A proposal can only be coordinated and submitted — on behalf of all applicants — by one of the following:

- (a) a public authority as described under point 3(a);
- (b) a legally established network or association of public authorities indicated under point 3(a);
- (c) a public or private entity delegated by public authorities indicated under point 3(a) to reply to the call. Delegated entities must have an explicit endorsement in writing by a public authority as described under point 3(a) to submit and coordinate the proposal on their behalf.

Proposals must be submitted by the legal representative of the coordinating authority on behalf of all applicants. Natural persons may not apply for a grant.

6. Eligible activities

Activities must start between 1 December 2014 and 1 March 2015.

The project duration must be between 24 and 36 months.

The activities to be financed under this call include as a minimum:

- development of field trials on the implementation of innovative measures. Appropriate attention has to be given to developing a robust evidence base and involving reliable monitoring, evaluation and reporting procedures based on recognised methodological approaches, developed by a competent and experienced policy impact evaluator in consultation with the relevant project partners.

This should include (the list is not exhaustive): identifying and selecting the measure(s) to be tested, the samples and the set of actions envisaged; defining the expected impact of the measure in measurable terms and assessing its relevance with regard to the expected results, including by thoroughly searching for examples of similar policy interventions that have been conducted domestically or abroad; defining a robust methodology and indicators to measure the impact of the tested measure at national and European level,

- parallel implementation of the field trials in various countries participating in the project under the leadership of the respective authorities (Ministry or equivalent). A sufficiently representative number of participating entities/establishments should be involved to reach a reasonable and representative critical mass and provide a significant evidence base,
- analysis and evaluation: effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the tested measure, but also of the experimentation methodology, of the conditions for scalability and the transnational transfer of the lessons learned and good practice (peer learning),
- awareness-raising, dissemination and exploitation of the project concept and its results at regional, national and European level throughout the project duration and in the longer term, and to foster transferability between different sectors, systems and policies.

An exploitation plan of the experimentation results through the Open Methods of Coordination in education and training and in youth, in connection with the objectives of the 'Europe 2020' strategy, is recommended.

7. Award criteria

The award criteria (see Section 8 of the Guide for applicants) for the funding of a proposal are:

1. relevance (20 %);
2. quality of the project design and implementation (30 %);
3. quality of the partnership (20 %);
4. impact, dissemination, exploitation (30 %).

The present call is divided in two submission/evaluation stages: (1) pre-proposal stage; and (2) full proposal stage. This approach intends to simplify the process by requesting in the first phase only basic information on the proposal. Only those pre-proposals satisfying the eligibility criteria and reaching the minimum threshold of 60 % on the score for the award criterion 'relevance' will access the second phase for which applicants will be requested to submit a full application package.

Eligible pre-proposals will be assessed on the basis of the award criterion 'relevance'. Full proposals will be assessed on the basis of exclusion, selection, and the three remaining award criteria: 'quality of the project design and implementation', 'quality of the partnership', and 'impact, dissemination, and sustainability'.

The final score for a proposal will be the total score obtained at the pre-proposal stage and the full proposal stage (by applying the weighting indicated).

8. Budget

The total budget available for the co-financing of projects under the present call is EUR 10 000 000, and is divided in the following way among the two fields of operation:

- education and training: EUR 8 000 000,
- youth: EUR 2 000 000.

Financial contribution from the EU cannot exceed 75 % of the total eligible costs.

The maximum grant per project will be EUR 2 000 000.

The Agency reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

9. Procedure for submission and deadlines

Before submitting an application, applicants will have to register their organisation in the Unique Registration Facility (URF) and receive a participant identification code (PIC). The PIC will be requested in the application form.

The Unique Registration Facility is the tool through which all legal and financial information related to organisations will be managed. It is accessible via the Education, Audiovisual, Culture, Citizenship and Volunteering Participant Portal. Information on how to register can be found in the portal under the following address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal>

Grant applications must be drawn up in one of the official EU languages and using the official application package. Please ensure you are using the correct application form for respectively the pre-proposal stage and the full proposal stage.

The application package is available on the Internet at the following address:

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/prospective-initiatives-eaca-102014_en

Only applications submitted on the correct form, duly completed, dated and signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the coordinator will be accepted.

Deadlines:

- pre-proposals: **20 May 2014** — as per postmark,
- full proposals: **2 October 2014** — as per postmark.

Application forms will be submitted as a package by post. Each package will contain only one complete paper version signed by the legal representative of the coordinating organisation. In addition, a complete **scanned version of the signed application** will be sent by e-mail to the address below immediately after posting the paper version. Both versions will contain all relevant and applicable annexes and supporting documents.

The package will be sent by express courier service (the registered delivery receipt of the mail service serves as proof) to the following address:

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
Unit A.1 — Erasmus+: Schools, Prospective initiatives, Programme coordination
Call for Proposals EACEA/10/14
BOU2 02/109
Avenue du Bourget/Bourgetlaan 1
1049 Bruxelles/Brussel
BELGIQUE/BELGIË

and by e-mail to: EACEA-Policy-Support@ec.europa.eu

Applications which do not include all the stipulated documents and which are not submitted before the deadline will not be considered.

For more details please refer to the Guidelines for applicants.

10. Further information

Detailed Guidelines for applicants and the complete application package are available on the following website:

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/prospective-initiatives-eacea-102014_en
